

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 045892
ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /016 R

66011

DRAFTED BY NEA/ARP:FGERLACH:CEJ

APPROVED BY NEA:EABINGTON

S/S-O:SSTEINER

-----020448 105259 /22

O 020344Z MAR 77

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 045892

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT JIDDA 1549 ACTION SECSTATE INFO ABU DHABI
AMMAN CAIRO DHAHRAN DOHA KUWAIT MANAMA MUSCAT SANA 27 FEB 77

QUOTE

S E C R E T JIDDA 1549

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SA, US, YS

SUBJECT: PDRY AT THE CROSSROADS: REESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS

REF: SANA 700 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: WE THINK THE REFTEL ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THE
SOUTHERN PENINSULA IS SOUND. WE HAVE RESERVATIONS ABOUT A
RAPID MOVE TOWARDS REESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS. WE THINK
WE SHOULD MOVE VERY DELIBERATELY AND EXTRACT MAXIMUM POSSIBLE
CONCESSIONS FROM ESTABLISHING RELATIONS. OUR SITUATION

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IS NOT ANALAGOUS TO THAT OF THE SAUDIS. THEY STILL HOLD
OUT THE PROMISE OF MASSIVE AID. ONCE WE HAVE ESTABLISHED
RELATIONS WE WILL HAVE LITTLE LEVERAGE LEFT, THOUGH WE WILL
BE IN A marginally BETTER POSITION TO WORK WITH THE SAUDIS.
END SUMMARY.

1. WE READ WITH INTEREST THE USEFUL REFTEL REVIEW OF

DEVELOPMENTS IN AND TOWARDS THE PDRY. WE GENERALLY AGREE ALSO WITH THE RECAPITULATION OF SAUDI POLICY TOWARDS THE PDRY, THOUGH WE WOULD ADD WHAT WE THINK IS AN IMPORTANT FOOTNOTE GIVING NUANCE TO THE SAUDI POSITION. THE OPENING TOWARDS THE PDRY WAS THE BRAINCHILD OF CROWN PRINCE FAHD--WHO WAS NOT THEN CROWN PRINCE. HE BEGAN ADVOCATING THE INITIATIVE EVEN BEFORE THE DEATH OF KING FAISAL OVER TWO YEARS AGO. THERE SEEMS LITTLE DOUBT THAT HE WAS MOTIVATED IN CONSIDERABLE PART BY THE DESIRE TO PUT HIS IMPRINT ON ANOTHER FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVE AFTER HIS SUCCESS IN RESOLVING THE LONG-STANDING BORDER DISPUTE WITH ABU DHABI. THIS WAS AT A TIME WHEN HE DID NOT HAVE HIS PRESENT SCOPE FOR FORMULATING SAUDI FOREIGN POLICY IN GENERAL.

2. THE POLICY OF RAPPROCHEMENT MET CONSIDERABLE OPPOSITION WITHIN THE SAG AND FAHD PUT A LOT OF WEIGHT INTO OVERCOMING THE OPPOSITION--IN THE PROCESS ENGAGING A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF PRESTIGE IN THE SUCCESS OF THE POLICY. TO SOME EXTENT HIS PRESTIGE IS STILL AT STAKE, BUT THE PDRY IS NOW BUT ONE RELATIVELY MINOR ASPECT OF THE FOREIGN POLICY FOR WHICH HE IS RESPONSIBLE. HE WOULD THEREFORE NOW PROBABLY BE MORE WILLING TO ABANDON OR MODIFY THE OPENING TO THE PDRY IF IT DID NOT SEEM TO BE PAYING OFF.

3. WE HAVE RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE BASIC RECOMMENDATION OF THE SANA REFTEL--THAT THE US SHOULD NOW BEGIN TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES FOR RENEWING RELATIONS WITH THE PDRY. AT SOME POINT, PROBABLY SOONER THAN LATER, THE SAUDIS ARE LIKELY TO ASK US TO REESTABLISH REPRESENTATION IN ADEN. THEIR PURPOSE
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IN DOING SO WILL BE TO STRENGTHEN THEIR OWN HAND IN DEALING WITH THE PDRY AND TO PROVIDE ANOTHER POLE OF ATTRACTION IN PULLING THE PDRY AWAY FROM THE COMMUNISTS. WE WILL HAVE TO GIVE SUCH A REQUEST VERY SERIOUS CONSIDERATION, BUT WE SHOULD NOT BE IN ANY HURRY TO ESTABLISH A MISSION IN ADEN. OUR POSITION IS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE SAUDIS. WHEN THEY DECIDED TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS THEY WERE, IN EFFECT, ABANDONING THE STICK BUT WERE PUTTING THE CARROT INTO POSITION WHERE IT COULD BE USED TO MAXIMUM EFFECT. THE ACT OF NORMALIZATION WAS USEFUL TO THE PDRY IN THAT IT BOOSTED ITS PRESTIGE AND REDUCED ITS ISOLATION IN THE ARAB WORLD. SAUDI ARABIA RETAINED, HOWEVER, ITS MAJOR LEVERAGE--THE POSSIBILITY OF LARGE-SCALE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE IF THE ADEN REGIME CHANGES ITS WAYS.

4. IN OUR CASE, WE WILL HAVE EXPENDED OUR MAIN LEVERAGE ONCE WE HAVE RECOGNIZED THE PDRY. THERE IS NO REALISTIC POSSIBILITY THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO OFFER THE KIND OF MAJOR FINANCIAL ENTICEMENTS WHICH IN THEMSELVES COULD CAUSE THE

PDRY REGIME TO BECOME MORE CIVILIZED OR LESS DEPENDENT ON THE PRESENT COMMUNIST AID-GIVERS. WITH A MISSION IN ADEN WE WOULD PROBABLY BE MARGINALLY MORE EFFECTIVE IN WORKING WITH THE SAUDIS ON TURNING THE PDRY AWAY FROM THE COMMUNISTS. WE ARE NOT SURE THIS IS SUFFICIENT REASON TO RESUME RELATIONS WITH THE PRESENT REGIME WHICH REMAINS COMMITTED TO ITS PRESENT POLICIES AND BEHAVIOR. WE WOULD GAIN NOTHING WORTHWHILE IF--AFTER RELATIONS WERE RESTORED--WE WERE TO HELP THE PDRY ECONOMICALLY (FOOD, SOME AID PROJECTS) WHILE THE COMMUNISTS CONTINUED TO RUN THE COUNTRY AS MUCH AS EVER. WE WOULD BE HELPING TO PRODUCE STRONG, HEALTHY COMMUNISTS IN PLACE OF THE PRESENT UNDERNOURISHED ONES.

5. WE PROPOSE THAT INSTEAD OF TAKING THE INITIATIVE TO RESUME RELATIONS THAT WE CONTINUE OUR PRESENT PASSIVE POLICY. WHEN THE SAUDIS TELL US THAT THEY THINK IT IS TIME WE RESUMED RELATIONS, WE CAN THEN GET THE WORD TO THE PDRY
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LEADERSHIP THAT IF THEY WANT TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE WE WILL BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE QUESTION OF RESUMED RELATIONS. THESE DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE VERY DELIBERATE AND DESIGNED TO ENSURE THAT WE GET THE MAXIMUM POSSIBLE CONCESSIONS FROM THE ACT OF RECOGNITION (THOUGH IT IS UNREALISTIC TO EXPECT THE PDRY PUBLICLY TO BEGIN REORIENTING ITS POLICIES.) AT AN ABSOLUTE MINIMUM WE MUST BE SURE THAT OUR REPRESENTATIVES IN ADEN WILL BE TREATED IN ACCORDANCE WITH NORMAL DIPLOMATIC CUSTOM. CONVERSATIONS WITH THE BRITISH AND GERMAN CHARGES IN ADEN CONVINCED US THAT IT WOULD BE USELESS TO HAVE A MISSION THERE OPERATING UNDER THE CONDITIONS THEY MUST PUT UP WITH. THE SAUDIS APPEAR TO HAVE GOTTEN SOME CONCESSIONS IN THE WAY OF TREATMENT. WE SHOULD AT LEAST ATTEMPT TO EXPAND ON THIS. BETTER YET, WE SHOULD DEMAND SOME EVIDENT DIMINUTION OF SOVIET INFLUENCE AND PRESENCE.

4. ONCE WE HAVE REACHED AGREEMENT WITH THE PDRY REGIME ON ESTABLISHING RELATIONS WE SHOULD MOVE SLOWLY TO IMPLEMENT. (IN THIS REGARD WE MIGHT TAKE A LEAF FROM THE SAUDI BOOK.) THE STAFFING PATTERN PROPOSED PARA 28 REFTTEL SEEMS LIKE A REASONABLE ULTIMATE GOAL BUT WE SHOULD PROBABLY TAKE SOME TIME GETTING THERE. WE SHOULD CERTAINLY NOT ASSIGN AN AMBASSADOR UNTIL WE HAVE SOME ASSURANCES THAT HE WILL BE TREATED WITH THE COURTESY AND RESPECT DUE THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRESIDENT. IN SHORT, BY TAKING A LITTLE LONGER WE THINK WE WILL BE MORE EFFECTIVE WHEN WE FINALLY HAVE PEOPLE IN ADEN. IN THE MEANTIME THE REGIME THERE IS NOT LIKELY TO GET MUCH WORSE.
PORTER.
UNQUOTE VANCE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS ESTABLISHMENT, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 02-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE045892
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: FGERLACH:CEJ
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770071-0236
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197703100/aaaadkku.tel
Line Count: 169
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: cc9c07ac-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 77 SANA 700
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2937117
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PDRY AT THE CROSSROADS: REESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS
TAGS: PFOR, PDIP, SA, US, YS
To: LONDON
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/cc9c07ac-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009